

News and Press
Darlington, SC
Circ. 5804
From Page:
1
7/12/2007
63111



135

COMMUNITY WORK

GE lends elbow grease to Council on Aging

Group of more than 20 employees volunteer time to paint, install doors, place wallpaper, etc.

BY NEIL HOPWOOD
editor
nhopwood@newsandpress.com

There are plenty of ways to spend a Saturday: basking on the beach, listening to tunes on the patio, watching the kids splash in the pool as one catches up on the latest spy novel. At the top of few want-to-do lists are painting old buildings, replacing worn-out screen doors and messing with sticky wallpaper.

But a group of more than 20 employees of General Electric in Florence spent much of a recent Saturday getting dirty at the Darlington County Council on Aging.

The aging building has been on the receiving end of corporate help projects before, but a quick tour of the building revealed chipping paint, torn wallpaper, broken screen doors and other eyesores in need of fixing. Funds are short for those things, Council on Aging Executive Director Jackie Anderson said, so she was very grateful GE decided to donate their time.

SEE COUNCIL AGING WORK 8A



General Electric aids Council on Aging project

continued from page 1A

"The renovations they did were very much needed and appreciated," Anderson said. "The assistance provided by companies such as GE is vital."

The Council on Aging is allowed to use its funds for programs only, and funding for building improvements must come from elsewhere.

"We do want to have a nice building seniors can come and enjoy," she said. "Seniors love to come to a place that's nice they can call home."

Darrell Davids of GE said a crew of about 25 employees part of the company's "GE volunteers" group routinely donate their time and expertise to community projects.

"Most of them are in Florence but we do some in Darlington because we have employees who live in Darlington," Davids said.

The group recently took a large group of children from the Boys and Girls Club from about four counties up to Carowinds for the day.

"This is one of the things we do well: painting and

doing reconstruction stuff. Sometimes we'll go in and do some plumbing, like tear out bathrooms. The things they needed here we have lots of skill at."

Among the tasks for the day: painting a 30 foot-long hallway after stripping the original paint, painting the main bathroom and replacing plumbing fixtures, wallpapering, painting and rehanging six-foot high interior shutters, and replacing a screen door.

"This is a good opportunity to get involved with the community," said GE compliance manager Juan Rosa. "We're very fortunate at GE where people want to volunteer their time for these types of projects."

Judit Sobel, a Hungarian native long relocated to American who now is with GE Healthcare, located the Council on Aging project through Darlington City Council person Dyan Cohen.

"We're going to do even more projects," Sobel said. "We do about two projects per month."



GE's Judit Sobel organized the weekend effort.

Also thankful for the hard work by General Electric were patrons of the Council on Aging. On a later weekday, while they ate meals in between activities, several said they would have nowhere else to go if not for the Council on Aging.

Ruth Garner said she had been coming to the council for many years.

"It looks good, we love it," she said of the recent renovations. "A little boy told me I needed to go to school, this is my school house."



News and Press
Darlington, SC
Circ. 5804
From Page:
8
7/12/2007
63111





News and Press
Darlington, SC
Circ. 5804
From Page:
8
7/12/2007
63111



General Electric gives back to the local community

First: Chrystal Gee applies a coat of paint to the hallway at the Darlington County Council on Aging on Pearl Street in Darlington.

Second: Longtime Council on Aging patron Wilhelmena Gregg said she's made countless friends at the Council and doesn't know what she'd do otherwise. Friend Sadie May March behind her echoed those comments.

Third: Beth Davids, Mark Taylor and Mary Taylor, all associated with GE through family or otherwise, did some dirtywork for a good cause by painting this fireplace and performing other "chores" for charity at the Council on Aging recently.

Mark Taylor, 12, said it was his first stint at volunteering. "It's hard work," Mark said.

"Harder than what?" his mother Mary asked.

"Harder than school!" Mark said.

Fourth: Moses Ellerbe (welding) and Ron Lochmer (engineering) of GE were wallpapering in the hallway.

Last, Teagan Lochmer, 7, pitched in to help her Dad paint the windows in the hallway.

PHOTOS NEIL HOPWOOD

